country and uphold the right to life and liberty; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to find out the number of such persons still languishing in the jails of the country?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the information received from the Government of West Bengal, one female child, aged 5 years, was admitted at SSM Home, Liluah on the basis of a Court order dated 30.3.1990, as there was no one to look after her after the murder of her mother by her father in her presence. For her education and proper care, she was subsequently sent to another Child Care Home where she is still studying, besides taking vocational training.

(c) and (d) "Prisons" is a State subject. It is essentially for the State Governments to ensure that prisoners are attended to in a humane manner. However, the Central Government has been sending advisories to the State Governments and providing them financial assistance in order to improve their prison infrastructure. Apart from this, the Central Government has been encouraging the State Governemtns to take such steps as are necessary to strengthen the criminal justice system.

Activities of Fundamentalist Organisations in Tamilnadu

2317. SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been spurt in anti-national and other such activities by some fundamentalist organisations like the Al-Umma in Tamil Nadu which attempted to target top leaders in the recent bomb blasts in Coimbatore;

(b) if so, since when these organisation were active;

(c) whether the State Government of Tamil Nadu had ever requested Government to ban such organisations at the national level; and

(d) the steps taken to counter the alleged role of ISI in these blasts?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) to (d) There has been a perceptible increase in the activities of fundamentalist organisations in Tamil Nadu in the recent past. The Islamic fundamentalist organisations, such as Al-Ummah, have recourse to explosives from 1991 onwards. Coimbatore, which had a history of communal tension for nearly two decades, withnessed violence in Nov./Dec.-97 and a series of bomb blasts rocked the city on 14th Feb., 98. Investigations into these incidents revealed that the bomb blasts were planned and executed by fundamentalist outfits like Al-Ummah. The role of ISI in these bomb plasts in still under investigation. The State Govt. has banned Al-Ummah and All India Jehad Committee and some of their leaders have been arrested under NSA. The State Govt. has also requested for banning these organisations at the national level. Advice of Ministry of Law in the matter has been sought.

Security Cordon for VIPs

2318. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have recently reviewed the category of security cordon provided to the political VIPs;

(b) if so, the details of the review exercise and the follow-up action taken thereon;

(c) the details of the names of the VIPs, the pre-review and post-review category of security provided to them; and

(d) the details of new VIPs added to the list for such security since the present Government entered office?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) Yes, Sir. The security categoriesation of all protectees in Delhi has been reviewed.

(b) and (c) The security of protectees in reviewed periodically based on latest threat perception in each case and necessary changes in security are made as warranted. This is a continuing process and in the last such reveiw security of 111 persons includeing political VIPs was withdrawn. In the interest of security of the protectd persons, the list of protected persons and the level of protection provided to them is not released.

(d) After the present Govt. entered office, 34 political VIPs including Ministers have been added to the list of protectees.

Bodo Militancy

2319. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the unlawful activities of militants have been stepped up causing extensive damage to life and property and that the road links between the North East and the country have been cut off;

(b) if so, the details of the estimated loss of propety caused by the Bodo militants and the number of civilians and security personnel killed in Bodo violence; so far; and

(c) what precise measures have been taken by Government to contain the activities of Bodo militants and to bring normalcy in the State?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) In the first week of June 1998, certain railway bridges and road bridges were damaged by Bodo militants. Emergent repairs were carried out and the road and rail links were restored.

(b) According to available information, the number of persons killed by Bodo violence from 1.1.98 to 1.7.98 is as follows:— Civilians: 142
Security personnel: 8
ethnic violence: 56
Details of estimated loss of property are not maintained.

(c) Various steps have been taken to bring the deteriorating law and order situation in the Bodo areas of Assam under control. Additional units of para military forces and army have been inducted in affected areas. Security of rail and road bridges, rail tracks have been tightened and intensive patrolling and static guard arrangements have been made both on the North and South Bank of Brahmaputra.

About 30 persons connected with the blasts have been arrested. Regular review both at Central and State Government level is being conducted. 18 relief camps have been opened for providing shelter to those displaced in the ethnic violence.

Central Government has also restarted the process of dialogue with moderate Bodo groups to resolve the various outstanding issues so that normalcy is restored.

Arrest of Veerappan

2320. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) how many associates of Veerappan, the notirous sandalwood smuggler, have surrendered till date and the details thereof; and

(b) the strategy drawn-up to arrest Veerappan?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADWANI): (a) As per available information a total of 4 persons have surrendered during the current year before the Chief of Special Task Force at Chennai. Three of them surrendered on April 4 and another on April 24, 1998.